

S.512 An Act Extending Voting Rights in Municipal Elections to Noncitizen voters of the Commonwealth

- • Citizenship requires allegiance and civic understanding: Non-citizens may lack commitment to U.S. culture, the Constitution, and values, as citizenship signifies full embrace. Many come from non-democratic systems without U.S. democratic familiarity. Naturalization, including civics tests, ensures voters grasp these principles—a safeguard lost without it.
- • Voting as a citizen privilege: Historically, voting is reserved for citizens to preserve citizenship's value. Extending it to non-citizens reduces incentives for naturalization and devalues the process.
- • Risk of suppressing citizen voices and threatening national sovereignty: Non-citizen voting could shift outcomes toward conflicting interests, eroding government by citizen consent. This undermines elections' purpose of representing citizens, infringing on their sovereign self-governance.
- • Challenges to election integrity and public trust: Adding non-citizens complicates verification, list maintenance, and enforcement. Massachusetts Town and City Clerks do not have direct access to a citizen verification list. This erodes confidence in elections, as citizens may see undue influence, weakening democracy's foundation.